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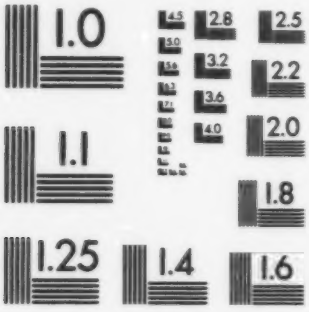

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Enabling
Learners

YEAR 2000:

A CURRICULUM and ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK for the FUTURE

• MINISTRY OF EDUCATION •

YEAR 2000 :

A CURRICULUM and

ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

for the FUTURE

(Draft)

90-00020/

To Parents, Educators, and the Public:

It is my pleasure to introduce *Year 2000: A Curriculum and Assessment Framework for the Future.* This discussion paper has been prepared to provide an overview of the plans for development of provincial curriculum and assessment processes over the next ten years. The paper details some of the new directions for education which were outlined in *Policy Directions* and the *Mandate* for the school system announced in January, 1989. In turn, those documents reflect thegovernment's commitment to implementing the great majority of the recommendations of the Sullivan Royal Commission on Education, released in August, 1988.

This paper was drafted in consultation with the Education Policy Advisory Committee, whose input is gratefully acknowledged. Parents, educators and the general public, as individuals or as groups, are requested to consider and discuss the plans presented in the paper and to provide comments to the Ministry by December 31, 1989. Your input will be used to prepare the final version of *Year 2000: A Curriculum and Assessment Framework for the Future.* The document will then serve as a blueprint for provincial curriculum and assessment work leading into the next century.

Thank you for your cooperation and assistance.

A.L. (Sandy) Peel
Deputy Minister of Education

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose and Organization of the Paper

This discussion paper proposes a curriculum and assessment framework for the British Columbia school system. It is hoped that those who read this paper will be stimulated to respond with suggestions for changes and/or with support for the various points of view expressed here. Feedback to the paper will be carefully analyzed and used to prepare the final curriculum and assessment framework document, which will be distributed in March, 1990. Once finalized, the framework will serve as the basis for future provincial curriculum development and assessment activities.

The paper consists of four major sections. The first section provides background information about the findings of the 1988 Sullivan Royal Commission on Education and about the *Mandate* and *Policy Directions* for the school system announced by the Minister of Education in January of 1989. The second section outlines some key principles about the nature of learning, about curriculum, about assessment, and about reporting, which have been used to prepare the curriculum and assessment framework and to describe the proposed Primary, Intermediate, and Graduation Programs. The third section presents a model for the framework itself, which relates curriculum, assessment, and student learning. The fourth section presents descriptions of the three program areas.

Background

The framework proposed in this paper is based on the *Mandate* and *Policy Directions* for the school system announced by the Minister of Education in January, 1989. The *Mandate* and *Policy Directions*, in turn, reflect the government's commitment to implementing the great majority of the recommendations of the Sullivan Royal Commission on Education, released in August, 1988.

Sullivan Royal Commission

The Royal Commission on Education headed by the late Barry Sullivan, Q.C., conducted an extensive study of the British Columbia school system between March, 1987 and July, 1988. The Commission's report, *A Legacy for Learners*, contains 83 recommendations dealing with a wide range of topics, including the areas of curriculum and assessment.

Social and Economic Change:

In providing the context for its recommendations, the Commission documented and confirmed the dramatic social and economic changes that have taken place in British Columbia over the past 20 years, changes that have placed new demands upon, and created new expectations for, our schools.

These changes include an explosion in knowledge, coupled with powerful new communication and information processing technologies. The structure of the economy is shifting from being primarily resource-based to

becoming a mixed economy with increasing emphasis on the information and service sectors. Society itself is changing and becoming much more diverse. An increasing variety of ethnic groups is represented, family structures are changing, the role of women in society is being redefined, and the age structure of the population is altering as older citizens make up an increasing percentage of society.

Serving the Needs of All Students:

The Commission found that the school system served the students who intend to go on to post-secondary education at colleges or universities very well. However, the Commission noted that the majority of students do not plan to attend post-secondary institutions, and for these individuals in their secondary years there is an "apparent failure...to offer a non-university preparation program that is valuable in its own right and not simply a second-best alternative...." Moreover, there is a "disturbingly high" dropout rate of approximately 30%. The Commission concluded that "one solution to these problems is to create relevant alternative programs of good quality to attract non-academic students, including those who might otherwise leave school early".

It is clear that the seeds of the dropout problem are sown in the elementary years, when students are establishing their individual identities, and critically important attitudes and skills are being developed. A variety of factors contributes to the dropout problem, including the student's home situation, economic factors, a perceived lack of relevance in the curriculum, and the emotional changes that accompany adolescence. Therefore, addressing the dropout problem means more than providing a range of alternative programs in the secondary years. There must be increased emphasis on helping children develop a positive self-concept during their earlier school years.

In view of the new social and economic realities, *all* students, regardless of their immediate plans following school, will need to develop a flexibility and versatility undreamed of by previous generations. Increasingly, they will need to be technologically literate as well as literate in the traditional sense, be good communicators, and be able to employ critical and creative thinking skills to solve problems and make decisions. They will also need to have well developed interpersonal skills and be able to work cooperatively with others. The challenge for the school system is to provide programs that will help students develop these vital skills and attitudes, presented in such a way that all students will want to participate and learn.

Need for a Statement of Mandate:

In order to deliver effective educational programs to the young people of the province, it is essential that all participants in the school system have a clear understanding of their roles and of the goals for the system. The Commission recommended that a statement of "mandate" for the system should be created, in order to clarify these matters of direction and process.

Mandate for the School System

Following receipt of the report of the Sullivan Royal Commission, the Ministry undertook a detailed review of the Commission's recommendations, accompanied by an intensive consultation process which involved the major education professional organizations, community groups with a special interest in education, and parents and teachers throughout the province. This input was taken into account in the formulation of Government's official response to the recommendations of the Sullivan Royal Commission, which was announced in January by the Honourable Tony Brummet, Minister of Education. *A Mandate for the School System* presents a Mission Statement:

The purpose of the British Columbia school system is to enable learners to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to contribute to a healthy society and a prosperous and sustainable economy.

The *Mandate* presents a description of the "educated citizen", one who is:

- thoughtful, able to learn and to think critically, and who can communicate information from a broad knowledge base;
- creative, flexible, self-motivated and who has a positive self image;
- capable of making independent decisions;
- skilled and who can contribute to society generally, including the world of work;
- productive, who gains satisfaction through achievement and who strives for physical well being;
- cooperative, principled and respectful of others regardless of differences;
- aware of the rights and prepared to exercise the responsibilities of an individual within the family, the community, Canada, and the world.

The *Mandate* also lists the Goals of Education:

Prime Goal of Public Schools — Supported by the Family and Community

- *Intellectual Development* — to develop the ability of students to analyze critically, reason and think independently, and acquire basic learning skills and bodies of knowledge; to develop in students a lifelong appreciation of learning, a curiosity about the world around them and a capacity for creative thought and expression.

Goals that are shared among Schools, the Family and the Community

- *Human and Social Development* — to develop in students a sense of self-worth and personal initiative; to develop an appreciation of the fine arts and an understanding of cultural heritage; to develop an understanding of the importance of physical health and well being; to develop a sense of social responsibility, and a tolerance and respect for the ideas and beliefs of others.

- *Career Development* — to prepare students to attain their career and occupational objectives; to assist in the development of effective work habits and the flexibility to deal with change in the workplace.

Finally, the *Mandate* describes the duties, rights and responsibilities of students, parents, teachers, school principals, school boards, district officials, the College of Teachers, the community, and the Ministry of Education. Of particular note is the recognition of the pivotal role played by teachers in achieving a quality system and implementing change where required in order to improve the system.

Policy Directions

At the same time as he announced the *Mandate for the School System* , the Minister of Education released a document titled *Policy Directions* , which outlines new policy directions for education. The key policy directions for school curriculum and assessment are:

- A new provincial curriculum structure, from the first year of the Primary Program to Grade 12, will be developed, based on four strands:

  Humanities: English, Social Studies, French as a Second Language and other languages, and Health and Guidance

  Sciences: Mathematics, Science, Environment and Technology

  Practical Arts: Physical Education , Industrial Education, Business Education, and Home Economics

  Fine Arts: Music, Visual Arts, Theater, and Dance

- There will be a Common Curriculum component throughout the thirteen years of schooling, which will incorporate aspects of all four curriculum strands.
- The Primary Program will be the first four years of school.
- Curriculum for Grades 4-10 will be organized on the basis of a sequenced set of learning activities leading to gradually higher levels of knowledge, skills and attitudes.
- New programs at the Grade 11-12 level will provide a choice of pathways leading to graduation.
- The regular Grade 12 provincial examination system will be expanded, and student performance on Grade 12 scholarship examinations will be given greater recognition.
- There will be increased emphasis on regular assessment of student performance and evaluation of program effectiveness.
- Accountability and reporting procedures at all levels of the system will be improved.
- Increased support will be given to Indian education.
- The principle of gender equity will be reinforced throughout the curriculum and schools.
- The multicultural nature of British Columbia will be recognized through education policy and programs.

PRINCIPLES

The school is one of the agencies that society expects will serve the basic human needs of young people. Design and delivery of school programs must be based on a recognition that all human beings have a fundamental need to make sense of their surroundings and of the events that take place around them. They need to have opportunities to share their understandings and to express personal feelings. They also need to be nurtured and supported so they can develop into confident, independent individuals, who can communicate effectively and live and work productively in cooperation with others.

Planning a program of studies to educate young people is a challenging task. One must simultaneously look backward to the accomplishments of the past that society wishes its citizens to know about and to respect, and at the same time, anticipate the opportunities and challenges of the future so as to provide young people with the necessary skills and attitudes to be active, happy, and productive citizens.

In this section are listed key principles about the nature of learning, about curriculum, about assessment and evaluation, and about reporting, which have been used to prepare the curriculum and assessment framework and to describe the proposed **Primary Program**, **Intermediate Program**, and **Graduation Program**. These are the titles currently under consideration to label the programs for the first four years of school, the next seven years, and the last two years respectively. The thirteen years of school can be referred to as: P 1 - P 4; I 1 - I 7; and G 1 - G 2.

The principles stated in this section, together with the Mission Statement, the Goals of Education, the description of the educated citizen, and the new Policy Directions, form the basis for the design of the three programs.

Learning and the Learner

1. Learning requires the active participation of the learner.

Learning is an active process. According to one widely accepted view of learning, the learning process involves individuals selecting from available information, and constructing meaning by placing the new information and experiences in the context of what the individual already knows, values, and can do. Learning thus involves connecting new ideas to previous knowledge, often subconsciously. Opportunities to reflect upon one's beliefs and knowledge are important for successful learning. Sometimes, learning results in the individual changing his or her conceptual framework in very significant ways.

What students experience in school programs is an important source of information and experience from which to draw in making sense of their surroundings, but it is not the only source. Family, friends, and the media all provide direct and indirect experiences and information which contribute to the learner's conceptual view of the world.

2. People learn in a variety of ways and at different rates.

Generalizations can be made about the learning of a specific age group, and overall trends in children's development are well known. For example, according to one generally accepted theory of child development, as children grow up, they tend to move from a stage of egocentric behaviour to behaviour that is more socially oriented. It is also observed that their ways of reasoning tend to shift from those based on concrete objects and on experiences that are immediate and personal, to more abstract ways of thinking. Older children are able to work on more complex tasks than younger children.

However, individual differences in rate and styles of learning must not be ignored. How each individual learns about a particular concept or conceptual relationship is a function not only of chronological age, but also of personal interests, learning style preferences, abilities, the learning opportunities and experiences which that individual has had in the past, and the characteristics of the current learning environment.

3. Learning is both an individual and a social process.

Although learning may be viewed as the construction of meaning by individuals, it does not take place in a vacuum. For many students, learning can only be effectively consolidated if there is the opportunity to discuss and compare one's understanding of an idea with others, which often leads to a better understanding. The social interaction component of learning also contributes to motivation to learn, and development of interpersonal skills is valuable in its own right. On the other hand, it is recognized that some students learn best when they work individually.

Curriculum

As used here, "curriculum" is the term given to the learning activities and intended learning outcomes of an educational program. Thus, it refers both to the objective of a set of planned learning experiences, and to the experiences themselves. For some intended learning outcomes, many different learning activities might be appropriate. For others, perhaps one teaching/learning approach is strongly implied.

Some key principles related to curriculum are listed below. These are drawn from the policy decisions announced by the Minister of Education in *Policy Directions*.

1. The thirteen year curriculum will be focused on the learner.

A learner-focused curriculum is *developmentally appropriate and sequential*, allows for *continuous progress*, provides for *self direction*, and is *individualized* as much as possible.

A developmentally appropriate curriculum takes into account the developmental levels of learners at various ages. For example, such a curriculum provides for the study of concepts in a generally sequential progression from concrete to more abstract concepts, while at the same time recognizing that not all students follow the same pattern as their learning progresses.

Continuous progress refers to allowing students to work toward intended learning outcomes at their own rate and according to their own style, and to not "failing" a child or requiring that a child repeat a year because his or her learning rate does not match the expectation for that age group. The continuous progress approach emphasizes what the child *can* do rather than what he or she can't do. Areas where extra work is needed are

identified so that students and their parents understand where more effort is required. The continuous progress approach is to be applied throughout the Primary and Intermediate Programs.

Curriculum should provide age-appropriate opportunities for students to direct their own learning, based on their experiences and interests. In order to do this, there must be choices within the curriculum. In addition, students need to understand the intended learning outcomes of the curriculum, and they need to be encouraged to evaluate their own performances and to keep track of improvements.

Ideally, curriculum should allow for individualized programs for all students. Children with special learning needs are the highest priority for individualized programs, but curriculum should provide enough options so that all students' programs can be individualized as much as possible to match individual learning styles and interests as well as rates of learning. The individualization of programs does not mean that students work and learn by themselves. Rather, it refers to the goal of having learning programs designed to meet the individual needs of students. The social interaction aspect of learning is recognized as being vital.

2. The provincial curriculum will be organized according to four strands: Humanities, Sciences, Fine Arts, and Practical Arts.

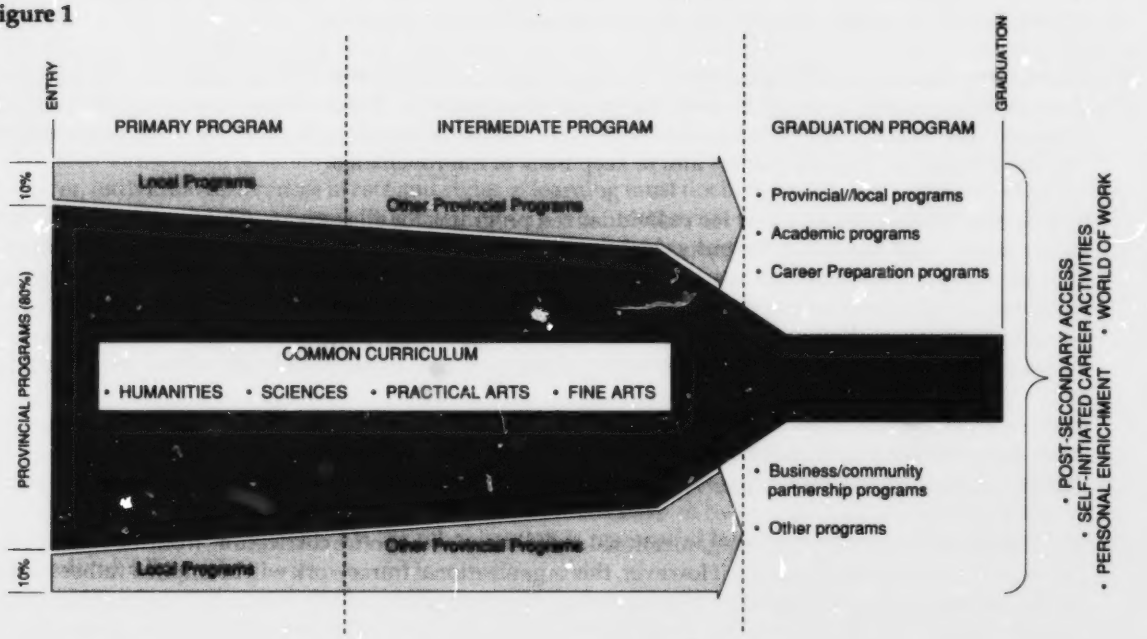
The four strands will provide the organizational scaffolding for the entire curriculum, from the Primary Program through the Graduation Program. However, this organizational framework will be implied rather than explicit in the curriculum for the Primary Program, where the curriculum will be integrated and neither strands nor specific subjects will be evident. This integration of the curriculum will provide Primary Program teachers with the maximum flexibility to organize learning activities so as to develop the broad knowledge and skill base, common to all four curriculum strands, that children will require in later years of school.

In the Intermediate Program the strand structure will be explicit. By the time they reach the Intermediate Program, children will be ready for studies in the four curriculum strands *per se*. Further progress toward the development of the "educated citizen", begun with the laying of the foundations in the Primary Program, can now begin to show the organization of knowledge and experience into categories, i.e. the curriculum strands.

In the early years of the Intermediate Program, greatest emphasis will be placed on the Humanities and Sciences strands. In the latter years of the program, there will be an increase in emphasis given to the other two curriculum strands in terms of time required to teach the curriculum. This weighting reflects the necessary continuing emphasis that must be given to developing the vitally important literacy and numeracy skills in the Intermediate Program, combined with a balancing out in terms of gaining experience in all four curriculum strands prior to entering the Graduation Program.

In the Graduation Program, the strands will provide the categories within which specific subjects are grouped. The relative weighting of the strands will depend upon program selections made by the individual student. Within the Common Curriculum component (see Figure 1) there will be representation from all four strands.

Figure 1



3. The provincial curriculum will include a Common Curriculum component, which incorporates elements of all four curriculum strands.

As illustrated in Figure 1, adapted from *Policy Directions*, the Common Curriculum will extend from the Primary Program through the Intermediate Program and the Graduation Program. The Common Curriculum will constitute a large portion of the provincial Primary Program, gradually tapering off through the Intermediate Program. In the Graduation Program, the Common Curriculum component will represent a smaller portion of a student's overall program.

4. The provincial curriculum for the Primary and Intermediate Program, including the Common Curriculum component, will require no more than 80% of available instructional time.

By designing the provincial curriculum to require no more than 80% of available instructional time, it should be possible for districts and schools to provide a variety of locally developed options. These options are expected to take many forms, according to the interests and priorities of the local community and the expertise of teachers. In some cases, the decision may be made locally to extend the provincial component of the curriculum and to treat some topics in more depth.

It will be required that the locally developed curriculum options are consistent with the provincial Goals of Education and the Mission Statement.

5. The provincial curriculum will emphasize intended learning outcomes rather than learning activities.

Intended learning outcomes and planned learning experiences for students, the two major aspects of curriculum, are intertwined and difficult to separate. However, as a rule of thumb, the provincial curriculum will concentrate on identifying the intended learning outcomes of educational programs. Teachers, exercising their professional judgment and taking into account the needs of the group of students with whom they are working, are in the best position to determine which teaching approaches and learning activities to employ.

Nevertheless, it is important to point out that the views of the nature of learning and of curriculum presented in this paper provide support to those educators who advocate classroom organizations involving greater use of multi-age groupings. Similarly, teaching approaches such as cooperative learning, which involves small groups of students working together on a common task, peer tutoring, and theme-focused rather than subject-centred student work, are consistent with the principles described.

6. Alternative pathways to complete the Common Curriculum will be available within the Intermediate Program, but "streaming" is not appropriate.

Differentiated programming to meet the needs of individual students should be provided in the Intermediate Program, but this must be clearly distinguished from streaming. In differentiated programming, essentially the same curriculum is studied by all students, but the pacing and methods used are different for different students. In streamed programming, students are locked into pathways that do not provide for re-entering the "main-stream", and which are usually designed to terminate the study of an academic subject. Streaming is inconsistent with the concept of a learner-focused, continuous progress curriculum. It is important that students are able to leave their options open.

7. Alternative pathways to graduation will be available within the Graduation Program.

The purpose of the Graduation Program is to assist students to prepare for the transition to adult society, to the world of work, and to further formal education, as well as to a life of ongoing learning and growth.

As outlined in the program descriptions section of this paper, it is intended that the Graduation Program will provide a wide range of choices for individual students. Depending upon the choices that individual students make, they may be learning at sites away from the school setting for some of their education program. The structured learning experiences that are available for students outside of school will vary from community to community and will depend upon the arrangements that can be made in each community with businesses, industry, professionals, non-profit organizations, and local municipal government.

8. The principle of gender equity will be reinforced throughout the provincial curriculum.

The changing role of men and women in society must be reflected in the curriculum. Student awareness of gender equity issues will be enhanced through the use of examples of contributions made by both genders to our culture and history. Learning resources will be reviewed to ensure that gender-neutral language is used and that they do not include gender-biased material. Program choices will be equally available to both genders, and program requirements will be applied equally.

9. The provincial curriculum will encourage awareness and respect for the similarities and differences among the cultures which comprise British Columbian, Canadian and other societies.

All students should develop an appreciation for the variety of cultural groups that enrich our society at the same time as they are learning about the historical foundations upon which our society is based. Teaching and assessment materials will be reviewed to ensure that they are as free from cultural bias as possible.

10. Awareness and respect for First Nations history and cultures will be encouraged through the curriculum.

Curricular content which reflects First Nations' cultures will be incorporated in appropriate places throughout the provincial curriculum, for the benefit of all students. A new Native Studies curriculum will also be developed as an elective in the Graduation Program. This program will meet the needs of a wide range of students.

11. English as a Second Language (ESL) programs will be strengthened.

The purpose of ESL instruction is to integrate students whose first language is not English into regular programs as soon as possible. The needs of ESL programs will be reviewed and additional resource materials provided to assist delivery of these programs.

12. The provincial curriculum will be adaptable for students with special needs.

Curriculum that is learner-focused and which assumes continuous progress allows for individualization of programming. This approach should therefore make it possible to address a wide range of student needs by slowing or accelerating the pace of instruction or by using special materials or equipment, as the situation demands. Achievement by special needs students will be recognized, and all students will have the opportunity to experience success in their particular program.

Assessment and Evaluation

The central aim of assessment is to improve student learning.

Assessment is the systematic process of gathering evidence of what the child can do. Evaluation is the ongoing process of making judgments and decisions based on the interpretation of evidence gathered through assessment.

At the outset, a distinction needs to be drawn between assessment and evaluation that focus on individual student performance and progress, and assessment and evaluation that focus on the performance and progress of groups of students. The two types of assessment and evaluation differ in the way in which results are reported, and to whom. Thus, assessment and evaluation of individual performance and progress is primarily reported to the students themselves and to their parents. This type of assessment and evaluation may also be used for certifying student achievement. Assessment and evaluation of the performance and progress of groups of students is reported to the public, and used to evaluate overall program effectiveness.

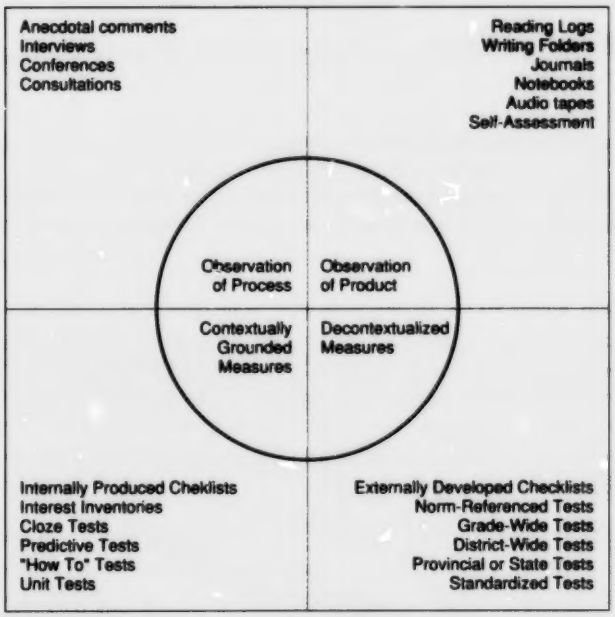
Assessment is done for several purposes. For example, assessment can be done in order to *monitor* an individual's or a group's progress over time. Assessment can be used to *diagnose* particular learning problems of individuals, and it can be used by the educator to plan appropriate work for an individual or for a group, based on an understanding of strengths and areas where additional work is required. Assessment data can be used to *describe* the performance of individual students or of groups of students for the information of students, parents, other teachers, school boards, etc., as noted above. Assessment data can also be used to *categorize* individual performances for the purposes of formal reporting of performance, certifying level of achievement, etc..

Assessment includes all the formal and informal techniques used by the classroom teacher to monitor progress, diagnose learning problems, and describe and categorize performance, such as anecdotal records, observational checklists and rating scales, assigned classwork, oral questioning, and classroom level quizzes and tests. Assessment also refers to cross-grade tests developed and administered by a school or applied district-wide.

At the provincial level, assessment includes the Provincial Learning Assessment Program which, in its present form, involves having entire student populations at three grade levels write achievement tests and respond to attitude scales. In these assessments, results are reported for the province as a whole, for districts, and occasionally for schools, but never on an individual student basis. Provincial assessment efforts also include the Grade 12 Provincial Examination Program and Scholarship Examination Program, in which individual results are reported back to the individuals themselves and used for certifying student learning. Summary information on these examinations is reported provincially.

The variety of possible assessment techniques is illustrated in Figure 2, with particular reference to the language arts curriculum area (from Anthony, R., Field, J., Johnson, T., Preece, A., Michelson, N. *Evaluation: A Perspective for Change*. University of Victoria, 1988).

Figure 2



Key principles related to assessment and evaluation include the following.

1. Criterion-referenced assessment and evaluation of student performance should be encouraged.

Criterion- and norm-referencing are concepts of relevance to the *interpretation of the results* of an assessment of student performance, rather than to the assessment itself. The same assessment test or task results for a student can be interpreted, and the student's results evaluated, by reference either to a predetermined indicator, objective, or standard (criterion referencing) or to the performance of the group (norm referencing). In practice, the design of a test or task is often influenced by the type of interpretation that will be applied to the results.

Norm referenced assessment is the usual way in which student performance is judged at the classroom level, as well as on large scale standardized tests. Very often it involves the use of numerical scores (marks), either in their "raw" form or after mathematical rescaling, which can be compared to the average score for the group. At the classroom level, the individual student's performance is "graded" according to where it falls on the expected distribution of student marks. The expected distribution is usually some approximation to the normal or bell-shaped distribution.

Although it is familiar, relatively easy to do, and attractive when ranking is the major goal of assessment, there can be significant problems with evaluation based on norm-referenced assessment. For example, it does not readily convey information about specific achievements or competencies of students. Another problem is that when the normal distribution is applied (grading on the curve), the proportion of students receiving each grade (level of achievement) is fixed, regardless of the actual distribution of achievement levels in the group.

Criterion-referenced assessment, on the other hand, may make use of numerical scores, but not usually to the degree that norm referencing does, and when numerical scores *are* used, an individual's score is not compared to other individuals' scores or to a group average. Similarly, the question of an expected distribution of marks is not relevant to the judgment about an individual student's performance.

The advantage of criterion-referenced assessment and evaluation is that it focuses on what a student knows and can do in relation to set criteria and makes it relatively easy to identify specific areas where further work is needed.

In practice, criterion-referenced assessment is not norm free. In predetermining indicators, objectives, and standards, educators take into account what they think students can reasonably accomplish and thus make informal reference to the expected performance for the group.

It is also possible to make reference to the group in reporting the results of individual student performances that are interpreted and evaluated in a criterion referenced manner. For example, the individual performances of a class of students may be evaluated with reference to a predetermined objective (criterion referencing), but the teacher may wish to report to the students, and to their parents, the proportions of students in the province who typically reach the objective (a form of norm referencing).

2. A variety of assessment methods can, and should, be used.

As noted above, the teacher may use a variety of assessment methods and "tools" to monitor, diagnose, describe, and categorize student performance and progress. Ideally, assessment methods are designed to assess students' know-how and in-depth understanding of relationships rather than simple comprehension of unrelated fragments of knowledge.

As the assessment research literature points out, demonstrations of understanding and competence outside of school involve the original production of something, i.e. discourse, objects, or performances. Outside of school, it is not expected that significant achievements must always be produced within a narrowly specified time period. Similarly, outside of school, achievement and production of quality work very often depend upon the opportunity to receive feedback and help from others. To the degree that assessment of student performance and progress in school reflect these characteristics of the environment outside of school, assessment methods can be considered "authentic".

As teachers work toward more "authentic" assessment procedures, they make increased use of student demonstrations and exhibitions. Such tasks require students to integrate knowledge from several different fields, to analyze relationships, to incorporate personal experiences, and to present results and conclusions to the whole class, school, or the public. Teachers can also maintain portfolios of student work created by and for each individual student, which provide ongoing records of student achievement and progress. Portfolios include summaries of accomplishments with examples, official records, diary items, etc.

There is also a place for the use of traditional, norm referenced methods of assessment such as standardized tests. In these tests, which take their name from the "standard" conditions under which they are to be administered, the norming group is a large enough sample of the population at a given age that the norms are taken as being representative of the population. Note that standardized testing can be contrasted with assessment relative to standards, which is a criterion referenced method of assessment.

Standardized achievement and ability tests have a long history and are easily administered. They are designed to discriminate between students mainly for the purposes of ranking. Group results are sometimes used to evaluate the general effectiveness of programs and to make comparisons between classes or schools. The disadvantages of using these tests include the fact that they are insensitive to the objectives of specific curricula, and they tend to focus on isolated fragments of knowledge rather than on conceptual relationships, due to the way in which they are constructed. For most assessment purposes in school, traditional forms of standardized tests are not very useful, and they are inappropriate in the Primary Program.

3. Assessment should be done regularly and frequently.

Ideally, assessment is a more or less continuous process. It should be seen by both students and teachers as an integral part of the learning activities going on in school. As already discussed, some of the assessment process may consist of formal tasks to be completed, including written quizzes and tests. Whatever form they take, assessment activities should be conducted on a regular and frequent basis. This will provide an up-to-date picture of the learning progress being made.

Traditionally, a distinction has been drawn between "formative" and "summative" assessment. Formative assessment is intended to identify areas where the teacher needs to place greater emphasis and the student needs to work harder. By definition, procedures intended for formative purposes must be undertaken before the end of a unit or course, so that changes can be made to instruction. In the concept of formative assessment is embedded the idea of individualization of learning programs, because what the assessment results indicate in terms of need for greater teacher emphasis and student effort may well differ from student to student. Formative assessment also implies regularity and frequency of assessment.

Summative assessment is done, by definition, at the end of a unit or course for the purpose of summarizing a student's achievement and level of competence in that unit of work. Usually this sort of assessment involves the awarding of numerical marks which are then used to assign a final unit or course grade. In practice, teachers often treat assessment activities conducted even part way through a unit of study as if they were summative, by recording numerical marks to be summed later to give a final mark and grade.

Most assessment done in schools is of the summative type. It is suggested that the balance should be shifted so that the greater emphasis is given to formative assessment for the purposes of planning further teaching and learning. This would also tend to reduce the emphasis on numerical scores for every aspect of a student's performance, and thus address the criticism about overuse, and often inappropriate use, of such measures in school.

4. Certification of learner achievement should be based on the broadest possible assessment base.

One of the purposes of assessment is to certify the level of achievement that has been reached by a student in a particular area of study. This information is used to make decisions about admission to subsequent courses and programs, in school or in post-secondary institutions. As such, the information needs to be as complete and as accurate as possible.

The problem with most of the assessment procedures we have employed in the past is that they do not convey much information about what a student can do, or even more importantly, about what a student can do in relation to an agreed upon standard or objective. It is strongly suggested that the use of a wider range of assessment techniques, as outlined above, would allow the creation of a more complete picture of the competencies and achievements of individual students.

5. Information about student learning will be regularly collected and used to improve provincial curriculum.

As described above, the Provincial Learning Assessment Program gathers information about student performance in relation to the overall objectives of various provincial curricula. Under the present operation of this program, a large scale assessment is done in each major subject area every four to five years. The program will be modified so that each year a large scale assessment will focus on gathering information about student performance and opinion in relation to one of the three Goals of Education (intellectual, human/social, or career

development). Also each year, a sample-based, rather than whole population, assessment will be done of student achievement in relation to all four curriculum strands.

A second source of information for improving provincial curriculum is the school accreditation process. One aspect of this process involves the school staff, and an external team, in reviewing the school's effectiveness in addressing the Goals of Education. The results of these reviews are a rich source of information that can be used to improve the design and delivery of curriculum.

Reporting

1. Reporting to students and parents should be done regularly and frequently.

In the ideal situation, the learner is kept continually informed about his or her progress and is, in fact, involved to a significant degree in self-assessment and evaluation. This is done through informal discussion between the teacher and student, through interviews, and through written feedback to the student about the quality of work being produced. At some points in the organized learning process it is appropriate and necessary for teachers to provide "progress reports" to both the student and parents about the degree and pace of growth in knowledge, skills, and attitudes which the student is exhibiting.

Traditionally, these progress reports have taken the form of report cards. Unfortunately, these report cards have not always conveyed as much information as many parents would like to receive. For example, most current reporting procedures do not clearly indicate what progress students are making toward specified objectives (i.e. criterion referenced reporting).

Regardless of the form it takes, reporting needs to be done on a regular and frequent basis. In future, schools will be expected to prepare at least three formal reports (including the final, or June report) and two informal reports for each stud[illegible]ery school year.

2. Reporting to students and parents should be based on a learner profile system.

As discussed in the next section of this paper, for each individual a learner profile could be defined, based upon judgments made about that individual's development along various learning dimensions. If this sort of profile was used as one basis for reporting to students and parents, supported by examples from the student's portfolio of work, then everyone involved would have a better idea of the actual level and rate of student achievement.

3. As much as is possible, reporting procedures should be consistent throughout a school, between schools in a district, and between school districts.

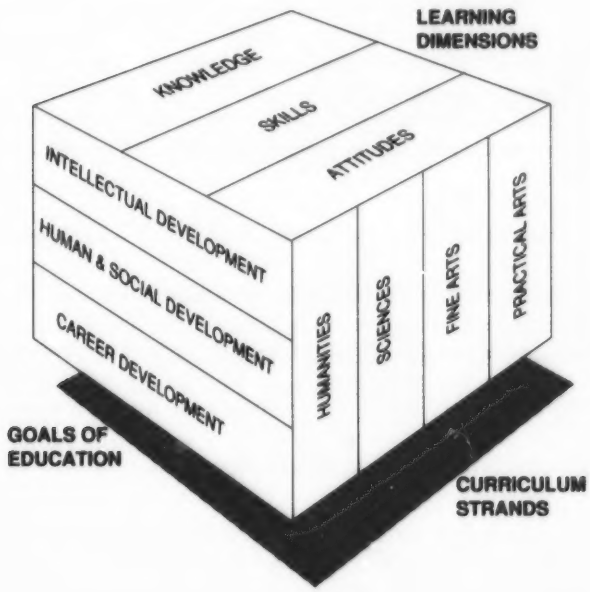
Although different teachers may have somewhat different classroom learning priorities depending upon their personal experiences and the grades or subjects that they teach, it is reasonable for parents to expect that the reporting forms and procedures will be very similar within a given school. Taking the school district as a whole, although different schools may differ in the emphasis they give to certain objectives because of local community priorities, it is equally reasonable to expect a relatively high degree of similarity in their reporting forms and procedures. The same considerations apply to the province itself, in terms of expected variations between the different school districts. Parents and children who happen to move to a different school district should find much that is familiar in the way that the new school reports student progress.

A CURRICULUM/ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK MODEL

Defining the Model

This section presents a model (Figure 3) of the interrelationship between the Goals of Education and the four curriculum strands discussed earlier in the paper, and between these and a set of "Learning Dimensions" derived from the educated citizen statement which was also included in the introductory section.

Figure 3



The purpose of this model is to provide a basis for designing curriculum, and assessment techniques, that focus on the learner.

The basic learning dimensions are knowledge, skills, and attitudes, as stated in the Mission Statement for the school system.

The **knowledge** learning dimension is defined in terms of *component dimensions* that involve acquiring a basic understanding of:

- the diversity and functioning of world social, economic, and political systems and institutions, and the factors that influence these systems, such as technology, cultural values, physical environment (i.e., **knowledge of world history, social, economic, and political systems**);
- the diversity within, and the functioning of, Canadian social, economic, and political institutions (i.e. **knowledge of Canadian social, economic, and political institutions**);
- the natural world and its operation, and the principles with which we organize our knowledge about it (i.e. **knowledge of natural systems**);
- the processes and exemplary products of human creative endeavour, such as literature, visual and performing arts, construction of social and natural science theory (i.e. **knowledge of creative processes and products**).

The **skills** learning dimension is defined in terms of *component dimensions* that involve developing the ability to:

- think critically, creatively, and reflectively (i.e. **thinking skills**);
- communicate clearly with other people using oral and written language, and other symbol systems such as mathematics (i.e. **communication skills**);
- reason quantitatively (i.e. terms of quantity relations, probability, proportionality, scale, etc. (i.e. **quantitative reasoning skills**);
- access, evaluate, organize and apply information effectively (i.e. **information processing skills**);
- solve problems and make decisions (i.e. **decision making skills**);
- interact with others in a socially appropriate and sensitive way (i.e. **interpersonal skills**);
- function productively in the everyday world, including the world of work (i.e. **life management skills**).

The **attitudes** learning dimension is defined in terms of *component dimensions* that involve developing attitudes related to:

- valuing oneself as a person of dignity and ability (i.e. **self-respect**);
- confidence in one's ability to cope and succeed (i.e. **self-confidence**);
- desire to work toward personal and shared goals (i.e. **self-motivation**);
- valuing the individuality of others and respecting their rights (i.e. **respect for others**);
- desire to work cooperatively with others (i.e. **cooperative attitude**);
- desire to take responsibility for oneself and for others (i.e. **personal and social responsibility**).

Each of the component learning dimensions can, in turn, be defined in terms of specific learning dimensions. For example, in the "skills" category, one of the component learning dimensions is "communication skills". Specific learning dimensions for communication skills include "reading", "writing", "listening", "speaking", "viewing", and "representing" (*Language Arts/English Response Draft Curriculum Guide*, June 1989).

Before leaving this overview of the model, one of its significant features should be noted. The illustration of the model is a three dimensional cube. A cube can be viewed from its different sides, and depending upon the side from which the cube is viewed, one or another of its faces becomes predominant. Similarly, the curriculum/assessment framework can be viewed from different perspectives. Thus, it is possible to think about the framework in terms of its organization into curriculum strands. Or, the curriculum/assessment framework can be analyzed according to how it deals with the intellectual, human and social, and career development of students. Finally, the framework can be understood in terms of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes learning dimensions. It is this latter perspective that is used to extend the model in the next subsection of the paper.

Extending the Framework Model: Student Learning and Assessment

The curriculum/assessment framework model can be extended to focus on the student learning dimensions and their relationship to assessment of progress (Figure 4). This approach can be applied on a macro scale, in which case it can serve as a description of the learning that ideally would take place in the thirteen year span from the Primary Program years through the Graduation Program. On a smaller scale, the approach can be used to describe the learning in the Primary Program years only, or in one year, or in an even shorter period of time. As a communications tool, this approach would be useful to describe to the learner, or to the learner's parents, or to other teachers, the growth in a student's learning.

Learning Dimensions

In the diagram of the model (Figure 4), the learning dimensions are illustrated as directions in which individuals grow intellectually (or socially, or emotionally, etc.) over time, without a fixed end point. These dimensions may be major learning dimensions (knowledge, skills, attitudes), component learning dimensions (e.g. communication skills), or specific learning dimensions (e.g. writing), depending upon the degree of resolution desired.

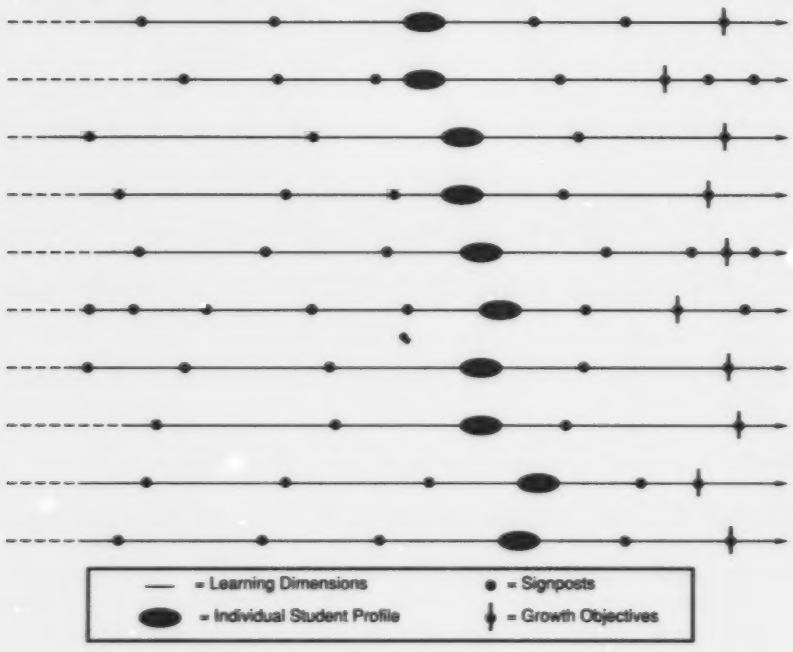
Signposts

An important feature of this extension of the curriculum/assessment framework model is the identification of significant signposts along the various learning dimensions. The signposts should not be viewed as fixed stages or levels which all learners must attain in exactly the same sequence. Rather, signposts are somewhat like mountain tops sticking up through a cloud cover as one flies from one point to another, i.e. they are landmarks along the way, indicators signifying that progress is being made. To make the concept of signposts operational in a practical sense for curriculum design or assessment purposes, it is necessary to identify *exemplars* of the various signposts, i.e. examples of the type of student work that is outlined in the signpost descriptions.

Growth Objectives and Learner Profile

If we can define the dimensions of learning, and the signposts of progress along the dimensions, then it is possible to define "growth objectives" for each of the dimensions. These are the intended learning outcomes. It should also be possible to define the "profile" of an individual learner as being the currently available evidence of growth in learning along each dimension. The profile is simply a snapshot of an individual learner at a given point in time. The learner profile is related to the growth objectives in a straightforward way: the overall aim of an educational program is to enable the learner to grow in such a way that the learner's profile reaches or surpasses the objectives.

Figure 4

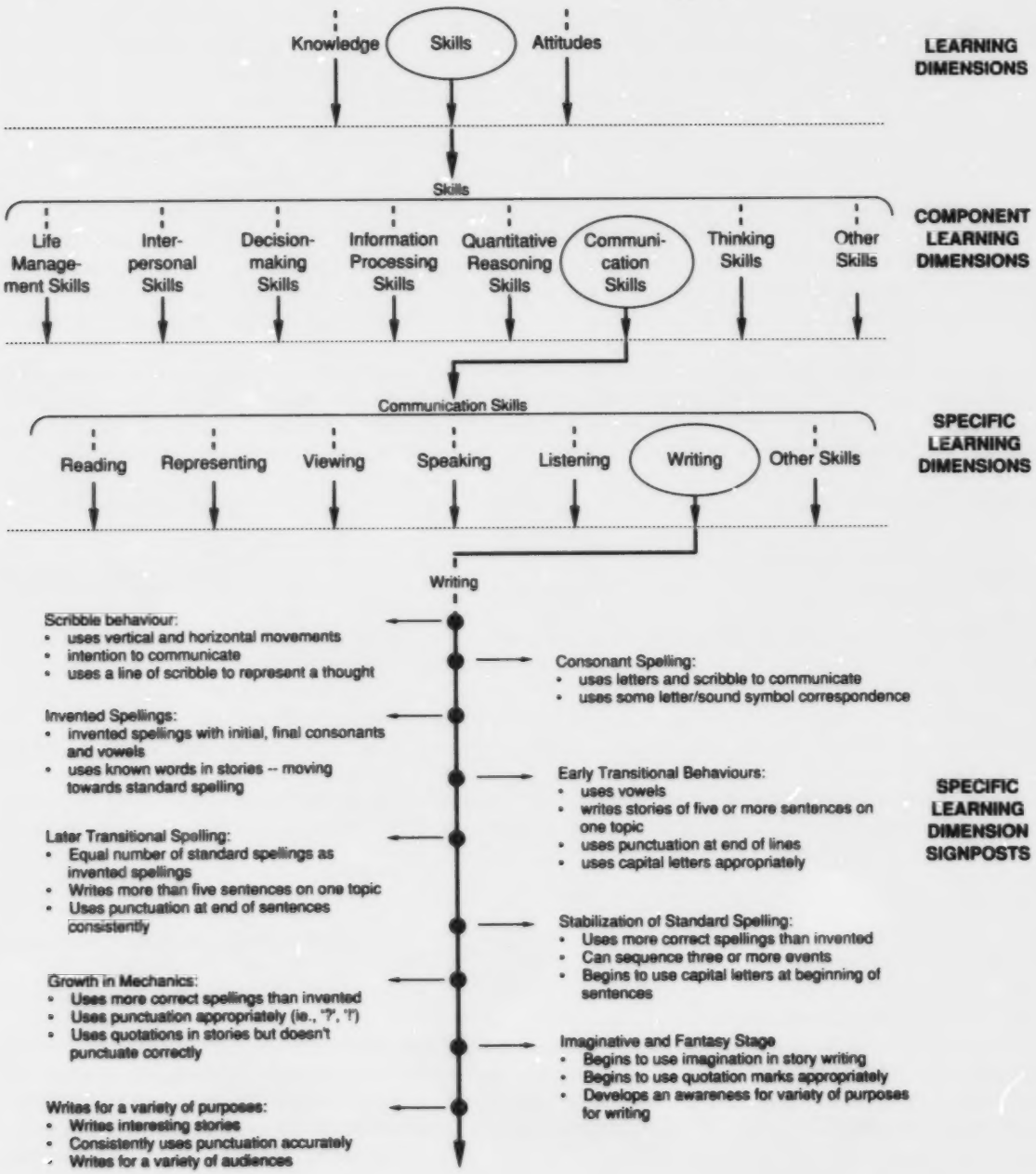


Applying the Model: An Example

An example of how the learning dimensions concept can be applied is given in Figure 5. In the example, the "skills" learning dimension is given greater resolution to show its various component dimensions. In turn, one of these component dimensions, "communication skills", is further resolved to show several of the specific learning dimensions of which it is comprised. Finally, one of these specific learning dimensions, "writing", is illustrated in order to show the signpost indicators which define it.

The major tasks for those persons responsible for developing curriculum and designing assessment tools and procedures will be to identify appropriate specific learning dimensions, to identify significant signposts along each dimension, and to determine what the target growth objectives should be for the dimensions.

Figure 5


Knowledge
Skills
Attitudes
LEARNING DIMENSIONS
Skills
Life Management Skills
Interpersonal Skills
Decision-making Skills
Information Processing Skills
Quantitative Reasoning Skills
Communication Skills
Thinking Skills
Other Skills
COMPONENT LEARNING DIMENSIONS
Communication Skills
Reading
Representing
Viewing
Speaking
Listening
Writing
Other Skills
SPECIFIC LEARNING DIMENSIONS
Writing
Scribble behaviour:
• uses vertical and horizontal movements
• intention to communicate
• uses a line of scribble to represent a thought
Consonant Spelling:
• uses letters and scribble to communicate
• uses some letter/sound symbol correspondence
Invented Spellings:
• invented spellings with initial, final consonants and vowels
• uses known words in stories -- moving towards standard spelling
Early Transitional Behaviours:
• uses vowels
• writes stories of five or more sentences on one topic
• uses punctuation at end of lines
• uses capital letters appropriately
Later Transitional Spelling:
• Equal number of standard spellings as invented spellings
• Writes more than five sentences on one topic
• Uses punctuation at end of sentences consistently
Stabilization of Standard Spelling:
• Uses more correct spellings than invented
• Can sequence three or more events
• Begins to use capital letters at beginning of sentences
Growth in Mechanics:
• Uses more correct spellings than invented
• Uses punctuation appropriately (ie., '?', '!')
• Uses quotations in stories but doesn't punctuate correctly
Imaginative and Fantasy Stage
• Begins to use imagination in story writing
• Begins to use quotation marks appropriately
• Develops an awareness for variety of purposes for writing
Writes for a variety of purposes:
• Writes interesting stories
• Consistently uses punctuation accurately
• Writes for a variety of audiences
SPECIFIC LEARNING DIMENSION SIGNPOSTS

PROGRAMS

As stated earlier, the thirteen years of schooling will be divided into three programs. The **Primary Program** is the provincial curriculum for the first four years of school. The **Intermediate Program** is the curriculum for the next seven years, and the **Graduation Program** is the curriculum for the last two years. Each of the three provincial curricular programs has a Common Curriculum component, incorporating the four strands of Humanities, Sciences, Fine Arts, and Practical Arts.

This section of the paper describes the three programs, based on the principles of learning, curriculum, assessment and evaluation, and reporting which were discussed earlier in the paper. The program descriptions which follow are intended to outline the major features of these programs as they would appear in future years. The new programs will be implemented in stages, with appropriate opportunities for fine-tuning of program directions.

Primary Program

This description of the Primary Program reflects the general directions for this program as described in the *Primary Program Foundational Document* (June, 1989).

Purpose of the Program

The purpose of the Primary Program is to enable the young learner to begin to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are the foundation for future school programs and for lifelong learning and participation in society.

Organization of the Curriculum

Non-Graded Curriculum:

A key feature of the Primary Program is that it is a comprehensive program which will treat the first four years of school as a single program entity, rather than as four separate years. Therefore, the provincial curriculum for the Primary Program will not be organized by grades. In contrast to the "horizontal" type of organization represented by grades, there will instead be a "vertical" organization by Primary Program goals, by learning dimensions, and by curriculum strands.

Common Curriculum:

The Common Curriculum for the Primary Program will be based on the four curriculum strands of Humanities, Sciences, Fine Arts, and Practical Arts. The Common Curriculum will comprise the great majority of the provincially developed curriculum available for the Primary Program years (see Figure 1).

Within the curriculum strands, the traditional subjects will be integrated (e.g. language arts will be integrated with social studies, and health and guidance, in the Humanities strand). In the Primary Program, the integration concept will apply to the strands themselves as well, i.e. there will not be a clear distinction among the four strands. In this way, it is intended that children will be encouraged to develop an understanding of the connections among all the things they study.

Time Allotments

The overall provincial curriculum will require no more than 80% of the available instructional time, leaving 20% for locally developed curriculum. No specific time allotment will be recommended for language arts, mathematics, or for any of the other subjects.

Learning Resources

Primary program teachers will use an even greater variety of learning resources than they do today. There will be an increased emphasis on the use of children's literature, both fiction and non-fiction, to help students develop their reading abilities, and a shift away from the use of lock-step programs that make it difficult for teachers to select and integrate a variety of resources based on individual student needs and interests. Similarly, writing development will be encouraged through increased use of student creative writing and journals, with much less use of workbooks and similar materials.

In addition to the increased variety of print learning materials which teachers will draw upon to work with children in the Primary Program, there will be more use of video programs to help present some of the basic concepts in the curriculum strands. Computer software will also be an integral part of the array of learning resources which teachers will routinely use. This software will be highly interactive and will provide a vehicle for small group creative and information processing work.

In some instances, custom developed resources will be commissioned when there are no suitable resources available.

Health and Guidance

The new Health and Guidance curriculum (*Learning for Living*) will be included in the Humanities strand.

French Programs

French as a Second Language:

French as a Second Language (FSL) will be an optional part of the Primary Program.

Programme Cadre de Français:

This is a unilingual education program intended for Francophone children, in which the language of instruction is French except for instruction in English language arts in the Humanities strand. The program parallels the English Common Curriculum in content for the thirteen years of school (Primary Program through Graduation Program). Eligibility for this program is described in Ministry Policy Circular 39 (87 08 07).

French Immersion:

French Immersion programs involve the teaching of the new provincial curriculum in a combination of French and English, intended to develop bilingual communicative proficiency. These programs parallel the English program in structure and content. Districts may offer either early French Immersion, beginning in the first year of the Primary Program, or late French Immersion, beginning in the third year of the Intermediate Program. Guidelines for these programs are given in Ministry Policy Circular 38 (87 08 07).

Curriculum in the Classroom

The new Primary Program curriculum lends itself to the use of learning activities that are open-ended, i.e. which are not constrained by concerns about working on topics or skill levels that are in the curriculum for the next grade. In fact, Primary Program classes which are organized as multi-age classes will include children who previously would have been assigned to different grades.

The Primary Program teacher will make extensive use of learning centres in the classroom, such as a library corner, a listening centre where children listen to recordings of stories they are reading, a writing centre where children write their own "books", an art centre, etc. Throughout the day, a child may spend some time working alone at a centre, working cooperatively with other children in small groups, speaking individually with the teacher about a story that the child has just read, or participating in a whole-class activity such as music, creative movement, etc. Sometimes, the teacher will organize all this activity around a particular theme.

In some circumstances children may move to another classroom to work with a group of children for part of the day, but generally they will remain with their own class which, as noted above, will often contain children of different ages.

Assessment and Evaluation Processes

Primary Program teachers will utilize assessment techniques in order to determine individual student strengths and to set future learning goals. The focus will be on the growth of the child and on what the child can do. Assessment will provide information for instructional decision making and program planning and will provide feedback to the learner in such a way as to support and develop the learner's self-assessment ability.

The concept of continuous progress is central to the way in which student learning will be viewed in the Primary Program. Students will learn at their own rate, according to their own styles. Because the grade level barriers have been removed, students cannot "fail" a grade, nor be forced to repeat a grade.

Teachers will establish and continually update a learner profile for each Primary Program student. The profile will be a record of the student's performance, in the form of a list of the types of knowledge, skills, and attitudes which the student has displayed along the various learning dimensions, keyed to the signpost learning descriptors for the dimensions. For each child a portfolio of sample work will be maintained, to include especially any work which provides evidence for the types of learning identified in the signpost descriptor statements.

Reporting Procedures

Teachers will report student progress to parents formally and informally.

Reporting will focus on the student's learner profile. Reports will also include anecdotal comments on the student's behaviour and individual accomplishments observed by the teacher.

When teachers meet with parents, they will be able to use samples of work from the student's portfolio to demonstrate the basis for the judgments that have been made about areas of student strength, and about areas where additional time and effort are needed. Teachers will need to be prepared to present and discuss exemplars of the types of work indicated in the signpost learning desciptor statements for the learning dimensions. New computer technology will be able to assist teachers with keeping parents informed.

Although reports will concentrate on communicating information about student performance in relation to the criteria defined by the signpost descriptor statements for each learning dimension, teachers will need to be prepared to provide information to parents, if requested, on the proportion of the provincial student population of the same age whose performance meets the same, or more or less advanced criteria. However, the use of grades (e.g., A, B, C ...) is not appropriate to report progress in the Primary Program.

Transition to the Intermediate Program

Children will begin the Intermediate Program when the classroom teacher recommends that the child is ready. This decision will be based on the child having reached the majority of the growth objectives for the Primary Program, but the school, in consultation with parents, will be able to amend this criterion in the case of special needs students. A student may begin working on part of the Intermediate curriculum while continuing work on some parts of the Primary Program. The student may begin the new program in the same classroom or in a different classroom, depending on how schools choose to organize for instruction. Regardless of whether children are in classrooms designated as "Primary" or "Intermediate", teachers will structure appropriate activities and learning experiences.

TIMELINE

Fall, 1989:	New Primary Program curriculum distributed for review and comment
Fall, 1990:	New Primary curriculum and assessment materials available for optional use
Fall, 1991:	Required use of new curriculum

SUMMARY

- non-graded structure
- subjects and strands are integrated
- 20% of time for local programming
- continuous progress for learners
- learner profile and portfolio are the basis for reporting

Intermediate Program

Purpose of the Program

The purpose of the Intermediate Program is to further develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes acquired during the Primary Program years, and to continue to lay the foundation for further school programs as well as lifelong learning and participation in adult society.

Organization of the Curriculum

Organization by Years:

The Intermediate Program curriculum will continue the "vertical" organization by learning dimensions and by curriculum strands that was used to organize the Primary Program, but unlike that program, the Intermediate Program curriculum will be designed to allow a "horizontal" organization by age grouping as well. Teachers of the Intermediate Program in a particular school will decide how the curriculum will be taught and the way that students will be grouped for instruction, subject to the policies of the local School Board.

Common Curriculum:

The Common Curriculum will continue to occupy a large proportion of the available time within the provincial curriculum, but this proportion will decrease over the seven years of the Intermediate Program (see Figure 1).

The Common Curriculum for the Intermediate Program will be structured by curriculum strands, i.e. there will be separate Humanities, Sciences, Fine Arts, and Practical Arts curricula. However, within the curriculum strands, the traditional subjects will be integrated to a large degree, as in the Primary Program. For example, there will not be a separate language arts/English curriculum or a social studies curriculum. Instead, these areas will be combined with Health and Guidance to form the integrated Humanities curriculum. French as a Second Language will be a mandated part of the Humanities strand for the entire Intermediate Program.

Similarly, there will be an integrated Sciences curriculum strand, consisting of the integrated study of general science (biology, chemistry, physics, earth and space science) and mathematics. The Fine Arts curriculum strand will include music, visual arts, theater, and dance. The Practical Arts curriculum strand will be less integrated internally than the other strands. It will contain elements from physical education, technology (industrial) education, business education, and home economics. One component of the Common Curriculum for the final year of the Intermediate Program will be the study of various aspects of business and trade, as outlined in the core and options of the proposed Business Education 10 curriculum. This course will replace the present Consumer Education 9/10.

The Common Curriculum for Intermediate 5-7 will be organized into units of 10-25 classroom hours. There will be "core" units, "enrichment" units, and "assistance" units. All students will study the core units and work toward achieving a common set of outcomes. Depending upon their strengths, interests, and need for further work on particular concepts or skills, students will also take a selection of enrichment and/or assistance units. Students in the same classroom may therefore be studying different units.

The introduction of the unit form of curriculum organization in the last three years of the Intermediate Program will help to prepare students for the unit/credit system that will be used in the Graduation Program.

Time Allotment

The overall provincial curriculum for the Intermediate Program will be designed to require no more than 80% of the available instructional time, leaving 20% for locally developed curriculum.

Within the Common Curriculum for the Intermediate Program, the Humanities and Sciences curriculum strands will be given greater weighting than will the Fine Arts and Practical Arts. However, in Intermediate 5-7, there will be a slight decrease in the weighting assigned to Humanities and a corresponding increase in emphasis placed on the Practical Arts. This will allow students to study home economics and/or technology education units, in addition to the Business Education 10 course described above. Schools will decide on the best ways to timetable instruction in order to meet the needs of students and achieve the intended learning outcomes.

Learning Resources

Intermediate Program teachers will use an expanded array of learning resources on a routine basis. In particular, there will be a shift away from the traditional textbook and towards use of multiple resources, including non-print media.

Health and Guidance

The new Health and Guidance curriculum (*Learning for Living*) will be included in the Humanities strand.

French Programs

French as a Second Language:

French as a Second Language (FSL) will be part of the Common Curriculum for the Intermediate Program. In the 1991-92 school year, FSL will be required in year 1, and also in year 5 as is presently the case. In 1992-93 FSL will be required in years 1, 2, and 5, and the incremental pattern will continue. By the 1996-97 school year, FSL will be in place for all seven years of the Intermediate Program.

Programme Cadre de Français:

This is a unilingual education program intended for Francophone children, in which the language of instruction is French except for instruction in English language arts in the Humanities strand. The program parallels the English Common Curriculum in content for the thirteen years of school (Primary Program through Graduation Program). Eligibility for this program is described in Ministry Policy Circular 39 (87 08 07).

French Immersion:

French Immersion programs involve the teaching of the new provincial curriculum in a combination of French and English, intended to develop bilingual communicative proficiency. These programs parallel the English program in structure and content. Districts may offer either early French Immersion, beginning in the first year of the Primary Program, or late French Immersion, beginning in the third year of the Intermediate Program. Guidelines for these programs are given in Ministry Policy Circular 38 (87 08 07).

Curriculum in the Classroom

For those schools which choose to emphasize the "vertical" organization of the curriculum in the Intermediate Program (i.e. organization by learning dimensions and curriculum strands), placing students into multi-age groups would be an appropriate form of classroom organization. Small, mixed-ability groups facilitate increased use of peer tutoring techniques. When combined with student activities based on themes, this grouping technique has been found to provide motivating and effective learning experiences.

Multi-age groups can also be constructed by grouping individuals of similar performance level for study of a particular topic, but when this is done, care should be taken to place students into different groups for other work.

The structure of the school day in the latter years of the Intermediate Program will undergo significant change. There will be a shift away from daily timetables of five periods rotating through a several day cycle (the familiar '5 by 8' timetable) to more flexible scheduling, reflecting the new organization of the curriculum by strands and units rather than subjects. For example, by grouping students in different ways, it would be possible to have a portion of the students in a school studying Humanities themes for two weeks, while other groups of students are working on Fine Arts projects, and yet others are focusing on work in the Sciences or Practical Arts.

The grouping of students and the details of programming are school-based decisions. It is likely that frequent staff discussions will take place during the program's operation and adjustments made as often as required.

Assessment and Evaluation

As in the Primary Program, teachers in the Intermediate Program will utilize a variety of assessment techniques in order to determine individual student strengths and to set future learning goals. Feedback will be provided to learners in such a way as to support and develop the learners' self-assessment ability.

Continuous progress will be an important concept throughout the Intermediate Program. Although a school may choose to organize by age levels, only in rare circumstances will a student be required to repeat a year.

By using the learner profile system, combined with the portfolio of student work, teachers will be able to provide other teachers with detailed information about each student's strengths, as well as about areas where improvement is needed. This should make it easier to make any necessary program adaptations for students when they enter a new class.

Reporting Procedures

As with the Primary Program, teachers in the Intermediate Program will report student progress to parents both formally and informally.

Also as with the Primary Program, reporting will focus on the student's profile. When teachers meet with parents they will be able to use samples of work from the student's portfolio to demonstrate the basis for the judgments that have been made about areas of student strength, and about areas where additional time and effort are needed. Teachers will need to be prepared to present and discuss exemplars of the types of work indicated in the signpost learning desciptor statements for the learning dimensions. They will also need to be prepared to provide information to parents, if requested, on the proportion of the provincial student population of the same age whose performance meets the same, or more or less advanced criteria.

Schools may choose to report to parents about student progress in relation to the four curriculum strands as well as the learning dimensions themselves, or some combination of the two. Reporting may make use of grades (e.g. A, B, C...).

Transition to the Graduation Program

Students who have completed seven years of study in the Intermediate Program will automatically be registered in the Graduation Program. In special circumstances, a student may advance to the Graduation Program after fewer than seven years in the Intermediate Program.

TIMELINE

Fall, 1990:	New Intermediate Program curriculum and assessment materials available for review and comment
Fall, 1991:	New materials available for optional use
Fall, 1992:	Required use of materials for first three years of seven year Intermediate Program
Fall, 1993:	Required use of all Intermediate Program materials

SUMMARY

- many subjects integrated within strands
- French as a Second Language mandated for all seven years of the program
- 20% of time for local programming
- continuous progress for learners
- learner profile and portfolio are the basis for reporting

Graduation Program

Purpose of the Program

The purpose of the Graduation Program is to assist students to prepare for the transition to adult society, to the world of work, and to further formal education, as well as to a life of ongoing learning and growth.

The program is intended to provide the opportunity for students to consolidate the knowledge, skills, and attitudes they have gained throughout the Primary and Intermediate Programs, and also to learn how to apply their experience and understanding as they assume their roles in adult society.

Organization of the Curriculum

Units of Study and Course Structure:

The Graduation Program curriculum, including the Common Curriculum, will be organized into units of study. Each unit will require approximately 25 classroom hours to complete and will earn one credit. Many, but not all, of these units of study will be grouped into courses. A provincial course will consist of 4 specified units, and

successful completion of the course will earn 4 credits. (Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses will be exceptions. The structure for these academic programs is determined by agencies outside the Province.) The unit structure of the curriculum will allow schools to timetable in different ways.

Students will receive one credit for each unit completed. For example, a student who successfully completes only three of the four units of a provincial course would earn three credits.

Courses will be designated as Level 1 or Level 2, reflecting the year of the Graduation Program in which they are normally taken. There will be no prerequisites for Level 1 courses. Some, but not all, Level 2 courses will have prerequisite Level 1 courses.

Work Experience:

By the year 2000, virtually all students will be spending approximately 10% of their "school time" away from the school site as they are engaged in the required work experience portion of their programs. Some students will spend the majority of their program time learning at various work experience locations.

For most areas of the curriculum, one of the units of study will be a work experience unit. These work experience units may be repeated a number of times for credit, depending upon the type of program in which the student is enrolled. All students (with the exception of some special needs students) will be required to complete at least 4 units (100 hours) of directed work experience, thus earning 4 credits. The required 4 credits need not all be earned in the same area.

Program Options:

The curriculum for the Graduation Program will provide a wide variety of choices for students, all of which can lead to the awarding of a Dogwood Graduation Certificate. All students will be registered in one of the Graduation Program options. Each student will study the Common Curriculum plus a set of other courses determined by the Graduation Program option which the student has selected and the student's plans after graduation. School counsellors have a vital role to play in assisting students with selection of a program option.

At graduation time, the student will be given a certificate indicating which program option the student pursued. This will be in addition to being awarded the Dogwood Graduation certificate, which the student will receive if all graduation requirements have been completed.

The program options are described in the next section.

Career Programs

A. Provincial Pre-Apprenticeship Program ("Passport to Apprenticeship"):

The purpose of the Pre-Apprenticeship Program is to enable students enrolled in career preparation programs in the apprenticeable trades to have their classroom and work experience applied toward apprenticeship requirements, thus reducing the length of their apprenticeship after graduation from school.

Students enrolled in the Pre-Apprenticeship Program will take 6 courses (24 credits) in one of the approved career preparation areas, including at least 100 hours (4 credits) of work experience. They will also register in the apprenticeship system in order to establish an individual apprenticeship record prior to graduation. Most students will work during the summer in their trade area, thus adding to their work experience toward apprenticeship.

B. Provincial Career Preparation Program:

The purpose of the Provincial Career Preparation Program is to prepare students for further study of a particular career field in a post-secondary institution, and in some cases, to qualify for advanced placement in a post-secondary training program. The program also provides students with some entry level skills for employment.

A wide range of program types is currently available: communications media; metal fabrication (auto body work, welding, etc.); natural resources (forestry, agriculture, etc.); services area (hospitality, community recreation, hairdressing, etc.); business education; construction; mechanics; and the technologies (electronics, drafting, plastics technology, etc.). Some of these areas are also included in the Pre-Apprenticeship Program.

For the Provincial Career Preparation Program students will take 6 courses (24 credits) in one of the approved areas, including at least 100 hours (4 credits) of work experience.

C. Community - School Partnership Program:

The purpose of the Community - School Partnership Program is to help students develop entry level skills for moving directly into the world of work through participation in a locally developed career preparation program. Although locally developed, this type of program has the same status as the Provincial Career Preparation Program.

The core of the program is work experience. Students will complete at least 200 hours (8 credits) of supervised work experience in the public or private sector. This learning in the workplace is integrated with learning in the classroom, and students will take a new 4 unit course specifically designed to help them develop their job seeking skills. A key feature of the program is the involvement of local businesses, industry, community organizations, and municipal government in providing work experience opportunities for the students, and in providing advice on the in-school components of the student's program so as to maximize the potential for employment after graduation.

Community - School Partnership Programs must be approved by the local School Board and by a provincial Partnership Program Approval Board.

For *all* Career Programs, students must complete:

a) The Common Curriculum (20 credits);

b) Career Communications 2 (2 credits);

This will be a 2 unit course that focuses on communications skills of particular importance to the world of work (e.g. report writing, letter writing, etc.). This course will be provincially examinable.

c) Career Mathematics 2 (2 credits);

This will be a 2 unit course that concentrates on mathematics of practical application in the world of work. This course will be provincially examinable.

d) Other Career Program requirements, plus electives (28 credits).

Each type of Career Program has specific requirements. For example, there are five designated courses in addition to 100 hours of work experience in the Provincial Career Preparation Program and the Provincial Pre-Apprenticeship Program. For the Community - School Partnership Program, students will take a specific course in job-seeking skills.

College/University Preparation Program

The purpose of the College/University Preparation Program is to prepare students for admission to universities in the province or to university transfer programs at the community colleges. (Admission to certain specialty and technical programs at British Columbia universities, colleges, and institutes involves meeting additional course requirements as specified in the calendars of these institutions.)

For the College/University Preparation Program, students must complete the following courses, which are based on the current requirements for general admission to British Columbia universities (program requirements will change to reflect any changes to university admissions requirements):

a) The Common Curriculum (20 credits);

b) English Language and Literature 2 (4 credits);

This will be a course with an emphasis on composition and the study of literature. It will replace English 12. There will be no specific prerequisite for English Language and Literature 2, but students will normally have completed Humanities 1 before enrolling in this course.

c) Mathematics 1 (4 credits);

This is the new Mathematics 11 course.

d) One of the Language 1 courses (4 credits);

Language 1 courses include the present French 11, German 11, Japanese 11, Mandarin 11, Spanish 11, and Latin 11.

e) One of the Science 1 courses (4 credits);

Science 1 courses include the present Biology 11, Chemistry 11, Physics 11, Earth Science 11, and Computer Science 11.

f) At least three courses from Level 2 (12 credits);

These courses must be selected from a list approved by the universities (currently the universities approve Grade 12 level courses in English, Science, Social Studies, Languages, and Mathematics)

g) Work Experience (4 credits).

Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses:

British Columbia universities recognize some of the Advanced Placement courses developed by the Educational Testing Service in the United States, and these courses are offered in some British Columbia public and independent schools. Similarly, some schools offer courses in the International Baccalaureate program, which is recognized by British Columbia universities. Students enrolled in any of these courses or programs must still complete the Common Curriculum, including its provincial examination requirements, but may substitute Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate courses offered by their schools for the provincial courses listed above under the College/University Preparation Program option. Students are cautioned to ensure that, in making such substitutions, they are fulfilling the entrance requirements of the post-secondary institutions.

Exploration Program

The purpose of the Exploration Program is to give students a foundation for lifelong learning. In contrast to the Career and College/University Preparation Programs, this program does not focus on preparation for a specific career, for direct entry to the job market, or for admission to post-secondary institutions, although it does lay the groundwork for participation in the world of work. However, students who complete the Exploration Program could pursue further studies through certain community college programs or the Open Learning Agency.

For the Exploration Program, students must complete:

a) The Common Curriculum (20 credits);

b) Exploration Studies 2 (4 credits);

This will be a new course which will extend some of the topics dealt with in Humanities 1 and 2. The course will aim to provide students with a broad understanding of social and lifestyle issues, and with well-developed information management skills, so that they are equipped to make careful decisions as they embark upon their roles in adult society. This course will be provincially examinable.

c) Courses drawn from at least two curriculum strands (in addition to the requirements of the Common Curriculum). At least two of these courses must be at the 2-level, in addition to Humanities 2 and Exploration Studies 2, and at least one of these 2-level courses must be provincially examinable (24 credits);

d) Work experience (4 credits).

The Common Curriculum and Graduation Requirements

The Common Curriculum component of the Graduation Program will provide a way for students to consolidate and apply their learnings in the four curriculum strand areas which they will have studied in earlier years at school. It is particularly important that students in the Graduation Program, who are about to take their places in adult society, are "aware of the rights and prepared to exercise the responsibilities of an individual within the family, the community, Canada, and the world", as stated in the educated citizen description. In the Graduation Program years, the efforts made in previous years at school to address the Goals of Education should be evident in the intellectual, human and social, and career development of students.

As described above, students will be required to complete the Common Curriculum, one of the program options, and a work experience component in order to qualify for graduation. The Common Curriculum will consist of 20 credits of work, and the usual pattern will be to earn these credits through completing five specified courses. A further 32 credits must be earned, including 4 credits of work experience, for a total of 52 credits in order to graduate. (This is equivalent to the present graduation requirement of thirteen Grade 11-12 courses.)

The Common Curriculum courses will be: Humanities 1 and 2 (8 credits); Science, Technology, Environment, and Mathematics 1 (4 credits); one Fine Arts 1 course (4 credits); and one Practical Arts 1 course (4 credits). Details about these courses are as follows:

Humanities 1 and 2 (8 credits).

These courses will focus on developing communication skills, understanding of current social issues and institutions, and decision making skills related to personal and lifestyle issues. The courses will draw some content from present courses in English and Social Studies and will include an extension of the recently developed P-10 Learning for Living curriculum into the Graduation Program years.

Science, Technology, Environment and Mathematics 1 (4 credits).

This course will incorporate elements of the present Science and Technology 11.

Any of the Fine Arts 1 courses or equivalent (4 credits).

Fine Arts 1 courses will be the present Art 11, Visual Art 2D 11, Visual Art 3D 11, Band 11, Choral Music 11, Strings 11, Music Composition 11, Acting 11, and Stagecraft 11. A new Fine Arts 1 course focusing on appreciation of the arts will also be developed.

Because the content of each of these courses will be reformatted into units, teachers will also be able to structure equivalent courses at the school level, consisting of units drawn from several of the existing courses.

Any of the Practical Arts 1 courses or equivalent (4 credits).

Practical Arts 1 courses will be the present Information Management 11, Data Processing 11, Accounting 11, Marketing 11, Keyboarding 9/11, Physical Education 11, Foods and Nutrition 11, Introductory Foods and Nutrition 11, Clothing and Textiles 11, Introductory Clothing and Textiles 11, Family Management 11, Construction 11, Drafting 11, Electronics 11, Mechanics 11, Metal 11, or Technology 11.

Because the content of each of these courses will be reformatted into units, teachers will also be able to structure equivalent courses at the school level, consisting of units drawn from several of the existing courses.

SUMMARY

In order to graduate, a student would need to earn:

20 credits	Common Curriculum
4 credits	Work Experience
28 credits	Program requirements plus electives
52 credits	

Note: The number of hours required to earn the credits for graduation will be less than the total number of hours available for instruction in the school. Schools will be able to provide additional elective programs.

Assessment and Evaluation

Assessment techniques:

To assess student progress toward the objectives of the various units and courses, teachers will use a combination of informal and formal assessment techniques, as they presently do in senior secondary courses.

Provincial Examinations:

Students will write provincial examinations at the completion of Humanities 1 and 2 (one examination), and Science, Technology, Environment and Mathematics 1 . Outside of the Common Curriculum, students enrolled in level 2 courses in the Humanities and Sciences strands will also write provincial examinations. The examinations will be administered in January and June as at present, and the examination mark will count for 40% of the final course mark in examinable courses.

The Career Mathematics and Career Communications courses required as part of the Career Programs option, and the Exploration Studies course required as part of the Exploration Program will also be provincially examinable.

For the Common Curriculum's Fine Arts 1 and Practical Arts 1 courses, provincial standards will be provided for assessing and evaluating student achievement, based on demonstrations at the classroom level.

Scholarship Examinations:

Students will continue to have the opportunity to write scholarship examinations in order to qualify for scholarship awards. Scholarship examinations will be available in all Level 2 courses in the Humanities and Sciences strands, with the exception of Humanities 2 itself.

Challenging Course Completion:

In certain circumstances, students may be awarded credit for a course, or a unit of a course, without taking the unit or course. One of these situations is where a student chooses to "challenge" a unit or a course for credit. In such a situation, the teacher will administer an examination of his or her making, in order to determine whether credit should be awarded. The other circumstance is where a student applies to be awarded "earned" credit for a course, or unit, based on demonstrable achievement outside of the school (e.g. in music or athletics). In such cases, the school principal will consult with specialist teachers and decide whether to award credit.

If the course is provincially examinable (Science, Technology, Environment and Mathematics 1, Humanities 1 and 2, and all level 2 courses in the Humanities and Sciences strands), students challenging the course or applying for earned credit must write the provincial examination, and the mark awarded will count for 40% of the final course mark.

Learning Resources

Students will have access to a variety of learning resources. These will include some traditional teaching/ learning resources such as textbooks, but because of the unit structure of the curriculum, when textbooks are used they will tend to be used in a reference capacity in conjunction with a range of resources in various media formats rather than a single textbook being used as a curriculum in itself.

In some cases custom developed resources will be commissioned when no suitable resources are available. The most appropriate single medium or multiple media will be identified prior to the development or customization process.

In some instances, learning resource "packages" will be developed specifically to support the various curriculum units. These will be modeled on the current Small Secondary School Project materials, which consist of sets of print, video, and computer software resources packaged for senior secondary courses. Such materials are designed to be "user friendly" and capable of being used by individual students or small groups of students working largely on their own.

The intent in providing such a range of resources is to free the teacher to be an organizer of student learning, and a mentor, rather than simply being an instructor who presents information for student absorption.

Special Needs Students

Special needs students (learning disabled, mentally handicapped, etc.) will be enrolled in one of the Graduation Program options, but the school will be able to modify the Common Curriculum for these students, in consultation with the students' parents and in accordance with district policy. Further, the school will be able to exempt special needs students from writing provincial examinations.

These students may, at the school's discretion, be given a program certificate for the Graduation Program option in which they are enrolled. However, a Dogwood Graduation certificate will not be awarded unless the provincial Common Curriculum and provincial examination requirements are met.

TIMELINES

Fall, 1990:	Begin partial implementation of new program and examination guidelines and new graduation requirements
Fall, 1993:	New programs and requirements fully in place

SUMMARY

- no prerequisites for entry to the program
- three broad program options
- unit structure for the curriculum
- all students take Common Curriculum
- all students participate in work experience
- Common Curriculum is provincially examinable or subject to provincial standards of assessment